



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **NEARLY 70,000 CRASHES GO FROM BAD TO WORSE**

*~ The Patrol aims efforts to decrease hit-and-run crashes ~*

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Florida has seen an increase of fatal hit-and-run crashes during the last two years. The Florida Highway Patrol is partnering with the Florida Sheriffs Association, the Florida Police of Chiefs Association and the Florida Department of Transportation to combat the problem. The campaign aims to reduce the number of hit-and-run crashes in Florida by educating drivers on their responsibilities if involved in a crash and the consequences they face if they leave a crash scene.

“Hit-and-run crashes are a growing problem in Florida,” said FHP Director, Col. David Brierton. “Florida had nearly 70,000 hit-and-run crashes last year. We hope the education awareness campaign and our partnerships with Florida law enforcement agencies and FDOT will help us meet our mission goals of traffic safety.”

This week, the Patrol is hosting press conferences throughout the state to focus on the victims, Florida law and active cases. For more information about hit-and-run crash facts and tips, visit <http://www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/HitRun/>.

#### **What to do after a crash:**

- **CALL** law enforcement.
- **REMAIN** calm.
- **ATTAIN** vehicle, witness and driver information.
- **SKETCH** the scene, showing vehicle crash locations.
- **HELP** the injured.

#### **A few hit-and-run facts for Florida:**

- Hit-and-run crashes involving fatalities increased from 162 in 2011 to 168 in 2012.
- The number of hit-and-run crashes statewide equaled 69,994 in 2012.
- Three out of every five fatalities in 2012 were pedestrians struck in hit-and-run crashes.

#### **What does Florida law say?**

- The driver must immediately stop and remain at the scene, must exchange information and render reasonable assistance to any injured persons.
- Leaving the scene of a crash involving a death commits a felony of the first degree and carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in a state correctional facility and/or a fine of up to \$10,000.
- Leaving the scene of a crash involving injuries commits a felony of the third degree and carries a maximum penalty of five years in a state correctional facility and/or a fine up to \$5,000.

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- Leaving the scene involving property damage commits a misdemeanor of the second degree and carries a maximum penalty of 60 days in a county jail and/or fine of \$500.

Here's what some safety advocates had to say:

“The FPCA Highway Safety Committee along with our member agencies throughout the state fully support the Hit-and-Run Awareness Campaign. The FPCA and its members are committed to supporting and developing strategies that educate the citizens we serve on ways to make the roadways of Florida a safer place for drivers, pedestrians, motorcyclists and bicyclists.”

~ *Chief Art Bodenheimer, Lake Alfred Police Department and the Florida Police Chiefs Association's Highway Safety Committee Chair*

“We commend FHP on their efforts to reduce hit-and-run crashes. This is a great example of a safety partnership that will continue to drive down fatalities in Florida.”

~ *Lora Hollingsworth, Florida Department of Transportation Chief Safety Officer*

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles provides highway safety and security through excellence in service, education and enforcement. The Department is leading the way to a safer Florida through the efficient and professional execution of its core mission: the issuance of driver licenses, vehicle tags and titles and operation of the Florida Highway Patrol. To learn more about DHSMV and the services offered, visit [www.flhsmv.gov](http://www.flhsmv.gov), follow us on Twitter @[FDHSMV](https://twitter.com/FDHSMV) or find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/flhsmv).

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